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New life for local government

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New life for local government

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Foreword

This pamphlet has emerged from a research group convened in its latter stages by Janet Newton and John Nelson-Jones.

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A system in decline

IT IS OFTEN ASSERTED that there is no place for local government in the second half of the twentieth century. The starting point of this pamphlet, however, is the belief that local government still has a full role to play but that because of its present form its part is being constantly stolen by the central government. No centralised bureaucratic machine can be responsive to local needs and variations. No regional boards or executives responsible only to the national government can represent local feeling. No departmental office of a national Ministry can give the same personal service as a homogeneous local authority.

Local government can serve many purposes, a major one being the responsive and efficient administration of services. On the assumption that local needs vary and that local people are in the best position to judge what those variations are, many services can probably be most effectively administered by a local authority. An outstanding example of this working in practice is the City of Leicester's plan for coping with its long-term parking problem.

A second major attribute of local government lies in the opportunities it provides for local participation, for as many people as possible should take part in the running of their community and the shaping of the environment in which they live. More particularly there are certain services, especially those which come under the health and welfare umbrella, which can properly serve those who need them only in a local government context – in fact only where those formulating policy have actual individuals with particular needs and not anonymous statistics in mind.

A further important function of local government is to provide democratic control and a mechanism to prevent too much power being exercised from Whitehall. This may appear to be unnecessary in a country with a central government system which is more or less democratic, but Members of Parliament have little time to question and probe the decisions of Ministries, let alone the actions of the multitude of area organisations now supervised centrally. Common sense alone suggests that control be exercised at the effective level.

Our system of local government also provides scope for experiment in all fields. Some of the most progressive postwar ideas on matters like education have come from local authorities. The Croydon plan for establishing sixth-form colleges is an example.

Local government can also serve as a useful training ground for national politics. Constituency associations, particularly on the Tory side, seem in recent years to have favoured parliamentary candidates who have been active in local politics. How valuable it would be if all these candidates had exercised real responsibility over services during their time on a local council!

Last and most important, strong and efficient local government could make a real contribution to national economic policy; this is particularly true in a country where local variations to a large extent determine the overall rate at which the national economy can grow. At the moment local authorities are generally consulted before major changes in their areas are made but it seems to be a makeshift and unsatisfactory process.

Responsive and efficient administration of services; scope for local participation; a form of democratic control; opportunity for experimentation; a training ground for national politics; a positive contribution to national economic planning – this is what local government could and should provide.

To what extent does the present system meet these specifications? There can be little dispute that local government today suffers from shortcomings that vitiate almost all its better possibilities.

The central and most particular source of weakness is its structure. This is largely because it was established at the end of the nineteenth century. The Local Government Acts of 1888 and 1894 set up two separate systems – one for the counties and one for the county boroughs. In the county boroughs a single-tier authority is responsible for the administration of all the local government services within its area. In the counties the two-tier system operates whereby the responsibility for some services lies with the county districts, i.e. urban and rural districts and non-county boroughs. In some rural districts minor services are looked after by the parish council.

There is little correlation between the size and resources of the authorities and the optimum size and resources for the efficient provision of those services for which they are responsible. It is perfectly possible to argue that many of the local government services in themselves require different catchment areas to work most efficiently, but

it is also perfectly possible to devise areas whose size and resources are more appropriate for all the services which they administer. At the moment the areas we have are those which were suitable for community patterns of fifty or sixty years ago. To quote the 1956 White Paper on the Areas and Status of Local Authorities in England and Wales (Cmnd. 9831), 'Since the present system of local government was established there have been far-reaching changes in the distribution of population and industry, the scope and cost of services, the speed of communications and the relationship between central and local government'. Above all the motor car has burst upon the scene and broken down the former division between town and country.

The state has become responsible for a vast new network of services, and the local authorities who should have played a large part in administering many of these services have either failed to manage them efficiently, or else have never been allowed to try. As a result, innumerable *ad hoc* agencies have been set up to administer services such as national assistance and the hospitals – agencies which are in practice answerable to none except the Minister.

In most cases the units are far too small to carry out the major services efficiently. This is most obvious in the sphere of planning. For too long the concept of planning in local government has been a negative one of control and it has been thought safe to entrust this to county and county borough councils – even to Rutland. This concept is at last giving way to the idea of positively planning all the aspects of the environment. This demands much more than so-called 'comprehensive development areas' comprising the slum areas of some of our towns and cities; whole areas of the country with their residential, commercial, industrial and recreational zones need to be considered as regions.

Moreover, national economic planning, which Tories are determined should be advanced by discussion and agreement rather than by government edict, would be easier to put into practice under a system of regional government. We have recognised that many of our economic problems are regional. Yet we have made little attempt to devise a structure to reflect this change of view. The Board of Trade regional organisation is no answer because it is merely a branch of the central government and entirely executive in nature, while the Labour Government's regional boards and councils will provide yet another stratum – sandwiched uncomfortably between the counties below (who will resent their advisory role) and the government above

(which can ignore them at will because they are undemocratic and without executive power).

A second aspect of the structural weakness of the existing system, closely related to the first, is the wide variation in size and resources between local authorities of the same nominal type. Thus the largest parish council covers an area of 99 square miles and the smallest 11 acres. Rural district areas range from 3 to 450 square miles. Devonshire is the largest administrative county covering some 2,611 square miles; the smallest is Rutland with an area of 152 square miles. Population figures are just as diverse. The largest parish population is 27,000, the smallest is 4. In rural districts the figures range from under 1,500 to over 100,000, in counties from Radnorshire's 18,000 to West Riding of Yorkshire's 3,750,000; in county boroughs from 30,000 to over a million.

As a result of these divergencies distinctions have to be drawn in the allocation of functions between units which are supposed to do the same job. In some cases unions of local authorities have to be formed before certain vital services can be provided at all. The standard of these services varies enormously over the country as a whole. This results in many instances in people suffering grave injustices – nowhere more obvious than in the education service, where a child's chances of obtaining a place in a grammar school depend to a large extent on where he lives and not on his ability alone.

Finally, the existing structure is a source of weakness where it makes such a rigid distinction between town and country and in particular between counties and county boroughs. Originally the idea of a county borough was a good one, recognising that the problems of the very large town could sometimes be rather specialised. But even before the end of the nineteenth century the original idea had been disregarded and it became the ambition of every large and medium-sized town to acquire county borough status as a mark of its importance. This struggle for county borough status has engendered bitterness between counties and the many large towns within their boundaries since, when a town becomes a county borough, the relevant county loses what was often a rich source of finance. In addition there is often a squandering of resources resulting from the provision over a fairly small area of separate services which the county borough feels that it must provide as a mark of genuine independence.

The town/country distinction is out of date. Both demand the same services, and with the growth in 'commuting' they are no longer more

or less separate entities as they were when the present pattern of local government was established. The country depends on the town for employment and often for shops and schools, while the town looks to the countryside for its recreation.

In addition to these major structural weaknesses, there are several general factors which reduce the stature and weaken the influence of local government. These are the decline of interest among the electors both in the actual election of councillors and in the way the services are run (except when something goes wrong); the uneven quality of councillors and officers and the limited range of the community from which councillors are drawn; and the financial position of the authorities.

The low level of public interest in local elections is revealed by these figures taken from the Registrar General's Statistical Review of England and Wales for the year 1960, which showed the percentage of the electorate which voted at local authority elections:

	%
England and Wales (national figure)	38.0
County boroughs	35.4
Municipal and urban districts (including City of London and Metropolitan boroughs)	40.4
Rural districts	37.5
County councils	33.3

(N.B. The figures for county councils relate to 1950)

The national figure dropped 10 per cent between 1950 and 1960. And the Liberal Party pamphlet *Local Government** draws attention to the fact that while the proportion of the electorate voting has gone down steadily in the last few years, the proportion of uncontested seats has gone up. It is a sad picture of growing apathy: people seem to sense that local government is a declining political force.

It is difficult to discuss at all rationally the calibre of officials and councillors because it is almost impossible to obtain any reliable information on the subject. However, one thing is clear: in any local authority except the large cities the level of officers' salaries does not attract the best men. We are already two thousand planners short in the local government service and it is perhaps in the planning field that the lack of professional expertise may most readily be seen – in the deplorable quality of much civic architecture and design. In the

*1962.

administrative sections there is an urgent need to introduce the latest work study techniques to ensure the efficient deployment of staff. At present too many junior and middle rank officials are bored to death doing routine jobs which offer no real test of their abilities and imagination. For these reasons the morale of the service is low and this makes it hard to recruit people of the highest calibre. Where there are experts in a particular field working for a local authority it is in the conurbations like London, Liverpool and Newcastle. In such places there are examples of professional men who have refused jobs with private industry at much higher salaries because of the special prestige and opportunities which the richer and more enterprising municipal authorities can offer.*

As far as elected representatives are concerned, we do have some evidence, if not of their quality, at least of the type of person who is most likely to be a member of a council. A particularly interesting piece of research was carried out by J. Sharpe and reported in the *British Journal of Sociology* (September 1962). He took a sample from thirteen county councils and seventeen county borough councils. He found that in the county councils the proportion of councillors who were retired was as high as a quarter. In the county boroughs it was 10 per cent. There was a dearth of men and women from professional, skilled and semi-skilled groups. This was probably a fairly typical sample and illustrates the narrow social and occupational range of councillors. The health of local government depends on the members having the widest possible range of experience and demands that, if any group is to be over represented, it should be the young, vigorous and forward looking.

Finally, the method of financing local authority services reduces the power of local government. At the present time the total expenditure of local authorities is about £3,000m. per annum, of which roughly £2,000m. is current and £1,000m. capital expenditure. The income of local authorities is derived from three main sources: rates, government grants, and trading and specific incomes, e.g. rents and licences. If the housing subsidies are excluded, government grants total about £900m. per annum and this is roughly the same as the total yield from rates. The Local Government Act of 1958 introduced the general grant system which allows the local authority to allocate

*The Maud and Mallaby Committees are at present studying the whole question of the quality of councillors and the career opportunities offered by the local government service.

its government grant between the services as it wishes. But on new projects requiring capital they are not free to invest as they wish without constant recourse to the Government for permission to do so. It is obviously essential to have some form of check on how the taxpayer's money is spent but if local government is to regain its independence a way must be found to dispense with the close control which exists at the moment over local authority finance generally.

Here then is an outline of the weaknesses in the present system and their causes, both specific and general. These are the shortcomings which our proposals are designed to cure. Some of the weaker counties and county boroughs can no longer provide the major services at a sufficiently high standard. Of course there is a place for small units but they must be within a regional framework. The alternative is the gradual surrender by local government of even the little influence and power which it still retains.

There has been considerable feeling since the war that something radical needs to be done about local government. Very little was done until 1957 except to tamper in a small way with boundaries. Then in 1958 the Local Government Act established machinery for the review and alteration of local government areas (outside London) in the shape of two Commissions to review areas of counties and county boroughs plus the five special review areas in the Midlands and the North, i.e. the conurbations. The Commissions have now completed several of the reviews and within their limited terms of reference some interesting and worthwhile suggestions have been made – particularly the idea of a 'continuous county' for Tyneside. A glaring exception to these generally imaginative proposals is their suggestion for dealing with the West Midland Special Review Area which consists of setting up five separate county boroughs to cover the area – this would quite clearly solve none of the problems and would be most unlikely to result in co-ordinated administration of services. Although the Commissions have displayed some imagination and boldness, their solutions to the problem will be out of date before they are put into effect. Any solution which involves drawing a tight circle around the area of the conurbations cannot possibly remain a viable solution for the next fifty years – indeed not even for the next ten.

The problem of the London conurbation was considered by a separate Royal Commission whose recommendations have been largely embodied in the London Government Act of 1963. Under this Act, the LCC has been abolished and in its place there is now the

Greater London Council covering the whole of the Greater London area. This Council is responsible for such services as traffic control, fire, ambulances, overspill and the overall development plan for the area. Underneath this authority there are thirty-two new London boroughs replacing the whole network of authorities which existed before. These boroughs, with populations ranging from roughly 150,000 to 350,000, are responsible for personal health and welfare services, housing, education (except in the old LCC area) and detailed planning applications.

Again this is a more adventurous solution than anything proposed before but it is not a long-term solution, particularly in the field of planning. Of course it is right that London should include all of the area known as Greater London but it should also include a great deal more besides if the strategic planning of the area's amenities and resources is ever to make any progress. The report on the South-East as a whole is a much more encouraging portent for the future.

The massive problem of trying to reconcile a high standard of administration of local services over the country as a whole with a degree of genuine local autonomy has not so far been tackled. *The time has come to try.*

Reform of structure

Part one : **The case for Regional Authorities**

THE NEED is to adapt local government but to see that it remains as local as is compatible with its ability to make an effective contribution to the government of the country. We live in an age in which improvements in communications and major scientific and technological developments have combined to emphasise the advantages of economies of scale and of specialisation and in which the need for positive town and country and development planning is becoming increasingly apparent. These factors argue in favour of local government units of a size larger than the present ones. Unfortunately those who place most emphasis on the value of local government are often those who, by perpetuating small and in many ways irrelevant local government units, would deprive local government of its ability to govern.

Local government structure must be considered in relation to the functions which local government is intended to perform and the division of them between different types of authority. When speaking of larger local government units we are thinking of units which will be able (1) to influence national economic policy and (2) to formulate and implement development plans over much larger areas than at present.

Economic planning

One of the greatest weaknesses of this country's system of government is that there are no democratic regional institutions for influencing the economic policy of the central government. It is true that county councils do attempt to influence Whitehall and from time to time groups of them join together on some particular issue, at least to the extent of sending a joint deputation to London. But this is totally inadequate as only regional bodies can effectively represent regional interests in the formulation of economic policy. Such bodies should have access to Neddy and the boards of the nationalised industries. They should make detailed studies of the regional implications of proposed policies and provide a source of constructive ideas for

utilising regional resources more fully. They should ensure that regional economic problems are not overlooked when national policies are being formulated. In particular regional units would be ideal for selecting and developing growth points.

The Labour Government is setting up regional boards and councils to enable regions to participate in economic planning. The regional boards, consisting of civil servants, will perform a similar function to the regional intelligence departments which we recommend. They will carry out research and produce the facts and figures required for regional economic planning. The regional councils include representatives of industry, commerce and the trade unions, and also distinguished academics and professional men. These people will be appointed by the Government. The regional councils will not have executive powers. They will merely direct the research of the regional boards, produce reports and try and sell their ideas to the Government.

Although the regional councils are better than nothing, they are not what is needed. It is doubtful how much influence they will possess. Their members, though distinguished, will be amateurs. With the possible exception of their chairman, they will not be paid and, most important, they will be devoting only a small part of their time to this work. One fears that Whitehall will be able to ignore them whenever it wishes.

The lack of executive power and responsibilities has clear disadvantages. The chance of impracticable recommendations is increased. The chance of good recommendations being properly implemented is reduced.

We suspect that the regional councils will be ineffective. There is no doubt that they are undemocratic. Government in this country needs to be decentralised but only to democratic bodies. The people of the regions are entitled to influence regional policies and they should be encouraged to do so. For this, more than any other reason, we consider democratically-elected regional authorities a great improvement on the Labour Government's regional councils.

Environmental planning

The need for environmental or town and country planning to be based on larger areas seems to be admitted even by local authorities themselves judging from their various attempts to operate joint planning bodies. In our opinion these joint planning bodies and other similar

devices, although laudable in the context of the current local government structure, do not go far in meeting a problem which permits of only two effective solutions.

The first of these solutions is for the central government to assume sole responsibility for environmental planning. The second is for *regional authorities* to assume responsibility subject to the provisions of a national development plan which they will have assisted to prepare. A region is the smallest area in which effective environmental planning can take place. Any lesser area is inadequate because so many people live in one place, work in another and possibly find their recreation in yet another. Also, something needs to be done to end the rigid dichotomy between urban and rural areas which has bedevilled English local government for so long.

Regions would provide the machinery for planning on the South-East Survey scale, for improving the national road system and for providing adequate recreational facilities for large urban centres. We look forward to the day when regional authorities will preserve large areas of countryside and develop them for leisure activities of every kind. If the Lea Valley scheme were sponsored by one powerful authority rather than by the present collection of borough and county councils its chances of success would be much better. We also envisage regional authorities grappling with the problem of housing overspill and new town development. Regional authorities with the additional powers which their activities would require should not lack for able councillors. *Local government would become once more a power in the land.*

Police dilemma

The fact that the region is the best area for economic and town and country planning is in itself a sufficient argument for establishing it as a local government unit. But there are other arguments. The ineffectiveness of the various small local authority police forces is well on its way to resulting in a national police force. Dr A. L. Goodhart said to the 1960 Royal Commission on the Police: 'The danger in a democracy does not lie in a central police force which is too strong but in local police forces that are too weak'. Strong *regional* police forces should resolve this dilemma.

Certainly at a time when highly organised crime and juvenile lawlessness are both on the increase, borough police forces and even those of the larger counties are a dangerous anachronism. A regional

police force would not be impeded by the fortuitous boundaries which complicate detection and prevention under the present system. It would assist in promoting a greater professional expertise in the fight against crime and enable experts to be called in more quickly. The strength of this argument for regional police forces is evidenced by the Home Office's introduction of twelve regional detective forces.

Larger catchment areas

Other services which should be administered by regional authorities are those which would benefit by large catchment areas. Amongst these are services such as the education of handicapped children which cater for only a small proportion of the population and which require a wide range of specialist teachers and equipment. It is grossly uneconomic for the average county or county borough to employ sufficient specialists. Either the service or the ratepayer must suffer. Regional authorities are the answer to this problem.

Further education would also benefit from being administered regionally. It comprises many subjects which are only of interest to a few people and for which there are few teachers. Courses in these subjects should be planned by regions so as to avoid wasteful duplication on the one hand and lack of choice on the other.

Croydon, Coventry, the former LCC and Liverpool provide good examples of what local authorities can do in the sphere of cultural provision, but the extent of local authority participation in this field is uneven and on average slight. The powers of local authorities in this sphere are permissive. It was calculated before the recent revaluation that if local authorities were to exercise their power to charge a rate of 6d. in the £1 for support of the Arts they could contribute over £15m. a year to music, drama, opera and other cultural activities. As it was they were spending only one-sixtieth of what they were empowered to spend. The type of councillors which regional councils would attract should have the vision and discrimination to spend wisely on the arts. In addition regions would be able to provide a few strategically-sited large theatres, opera houses, etc., and provide them with large-scale financial support. Few existing authorities are able to do this. Opera and music generally are seriously neglected by local authorities and, while there are a number of small unambitious municipal theatres, there are only a few large ones capable of producing a succession of high-class plays and attracting widespread interest.

Training programmes

A major weakness of local government is that a number of its officials are not properly trained. Few local authorities run training courses for administrative and specialist personnel. The former LCC was a notable exception.

Planning and the specialist health, welfare and children's services are amongst those which stand to gain most from the introduction of improved training facilities.

Unfortunately training is largely neglected because only the largest authorities can afford to provide instructors for long training courses and to administer them. The position is similar to that in industry where it is the large companies which take on more than their share of apprentices.

Regional authorities would be well equipped by virtue of their resources to operate ambitious training schemes for high-grade administrative personnel and for specialist staff, irrespective of whether or not they were regional personnel. They would, of course, need to liaise with their second-tier authorities when preparing the training programmes for second-tier personnel in order to ensure that sufficient opportunities were given for trainees to obtain practical experience.

Lost opportunities

There is also the question of services which might have been given to local authorities to administer and were not because of the inadequacies of many of them. In many European countries, in particular Sweden, Denmark and Holland, the following services – hospitals, national assistance, unemployment benefits, gas and electricity – are generally operated by local authorities. In Sweden local authorities are even concerned with the provision of pensions. In this country gas, electricity and pensions are much better dealt with as they are now, but the other services could almost certainly have been given, with advantage, to local authorities or boards on which local authorities were represented, had sufficiently strong authorities been in existence. In particular there is a convincing *prima facie* case for hospitals to be administered by regions so as to encourage the hospital administrators to be more responsive to the wishes of patients and their families and to subject them to a measure of real democratic control. The regional hospital boards and the hospital management committees do not achieve this at present.

A chance for the regions

With all these considerations in mind we have no hesitation in recommending that regional authorities be substituted for the existing counties and county boroughs and that there be two main tiers of local authority, the region as the first-tier and the regional district as the second-tier.

In the First Schedule to this pamphlet we give a map of England and Wales divided into eight regions. Their populations vary from sixteen million for the South-East to two million for East Anglia. In the Second Schedule, we list them with their populations and their constituent counties. It will be seen that we have taken the view that the basic regions of the country are the major conurbations, together with their respective areas of influence. We have then divided the rest of the country into areas which have close geographical, agricultural, industrial and traditional affinities. In this we were greatly helped by the recently published *Atlas of Britain** with its scholarly maps illustrating these affinities. Where possible, existing administrative boundaries have been retained. *The functions of the proposed regions are set out in the chart to the pamphlet.*

Special problem of the South-East

The great size and importance of the South-East region means that although it is the correct region for planning purposes, it is unnecessarily large for administering the other regional services. The remaining regional services, such as further education and the police, could be run just as efficiently at the sixteen million population level, but this would result either in the South-East having an excessively large council or in the ratio of councillors to electors becoming undesirably low. We recommend that for the purposes of all regional services, except economic and environmental planning and traffic planning of major and trunk roads, the South-East be divided into three sub-regions, the Greater London Council, North Thames and South Thames, the boundaries of which are indicated by broken lines in the map in the First Schedule. The sub-regions should each elect a third of their members to the South-East Region Council or as near to a third as will ensure equal per capita representation of their respective populations. Their regional councillors should be elected by the parties represented on the sub-regional councils in proportion to their respective strengths. Once elected to the Regional Council, a member could not be removed by those who elected him, until the

*Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1963.

end of his sub-regional council's term of life. This reservation is considered necessary to ensure that the South-East Regional Council, which will be responsible for major policy decisions affecting the whole area, will have a will of its own and not merely mirror the differing viewpoints of its component sub-regions. The object is, of course, to enable it to see the problems of the South-East as a whole.*

This is clearly a subject which merits, and will stimulate, much thought and argument amongst those concerned with local government on the one hand and planning on the other. Certainly it must be accepted that, even if the sub-regional approach is adopted, the South-East Regional Council must have the powers and financial strength to ensure that its sub-regions conform with the regional plan in its positive, as well as its negative aspects.

It would be disastrous to adapt the sub-regional solution proposed to meet the special problem of the South-East elsewhere in order to preserve the existing counties within a regional planning framework. County representatives on a regional council would be less likely than our suggested sub-regional representatives to take a broad view; and the advantages discussed earlier in this chapter of having larger areas for the administration of certain services, other than planning, would be lost.

Part two : **Second tier: the Regional Districts**

With regional councils as the first-tier authority the simple solution to the problem of the second-tier authority would be to retain the existing county borough, borough, urban district and rural district councils, subject to the regular review of boundaries by a permanent Boundaries Commission, but to modify their functions to fit in with those allocated to the regions. If this solution were adopted the existing district councils would to a large extent retain both their boun-

**Note of dissent.* It was at this point in the pamphlet that one member of the group felt obliged to dissent from the majority view. Martin Mogridge maintains that it is impractical to isolate the other regional services from the regional planning functions. He insists that, as it is accepted that our proposed South-East Region is the correct area for planning purposes, then it will follow that it is the body to administer the other regional services as well. This is because he regards the implementation of regional planning policy as being inextricably linked with the administration of these services.

daries and their functions, but county boroughs and boroughs would lose some of their functions. They would surrender responsibility for the police service and county boroughs would lose some of their educational functions. This solution looks attractive until it is examined in detail.

Health, welfare and children's services

The health, welfare and children's services, for example, need to be administered by authorities substantially larger than the majority of existing second-tier authorities and county boroughs and at the same time substantially smaller than our proposed regions and, for that matter, than the majority of counties.

There is a strong case for saying that health, welfare and children's authorities should not have populations of less than 100,000. This view is expressly supported by the Herbert Report* on London local government which suggested that these services should be administered together (they are split at the moment) and that the ideal size of the authority administering them is somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000. Many experts, including Professor Donnison in his pamphlet *Health, Welfare and Democracy in Greater London*,† have argued that such an authority should be substantially larger.

Certainly it seems almost impossible to argue that it should be smaller. Efficient health, welfare and children's services depend largely on having capable chief officers, supported by qualified specialists and adequate resources. Small authorities do not attract chief officers of the required calibre. An excessive number of small authorities means that there are too few plum posts to provide career prospects likely to attract men of exceptional ability who desire not only to be paid on a par with their colleagues outside local government but also to be given the opportunity to utilise their abilities to the full.

A health authority with a population of less than 100,000 is unlikely to employ the specialist advisers needed to support its chief health officer. As a result it will not be able to operate the type of domiciliary team required.

The main reason for not wishing to entrust the health, welfare and children's services to the regions is that they are too remote for the effective operation of domiciliary teams. The idea behind the domi-

*Cmnd. 1164, 1960.

†Bell, for London School of Economics, 1962.

ciliary team, as expounded in the Ministry of Health publication *Health and Welfare – the Development of Community Care* (Cmnd. 1973, April 1963) is that health and welfare problems of individuals and families should not be attacked by specialists from individual departments, whose panaceas might conflict because none of them would have a complete picture of the problem, but by a team of specialists headed by a qualified general practitioner, which will make a co-ordinated attempt to resolve the problems of those in need of its assistance. Such a team would be ideally fitted to resolve family problems such as whether grandmother should remain at home, which may well be best for her, or whether she should go into an old people's home to eliminate the excessive strain which her presence creates for the rest of the family, or whether a move to suitable alternative accommodation might not be best for all concerned.

The Herbert Commission maintains that it becomes increasingly unlikely once the population of an authority exceeds 500,000 that the dangers of departmentalisation in the health and welfare services will be avoided. It stresses the advantages to the recipients of these services of having to visit only one building in order to obtain the advice of specialists from different departments. It suggests that support of the general practitioner will be more readily obtained if the health, etc. services are administered on as local a level as possible.

Another reason for not wishing the health, welfare and children's services to be administered by the regions is that regional councillors would lack the time to take a personal interest in particular cases and would be relatively inaccessible to the recipients of these services. The councillors of a smaller authority would be better able to give the problems of individuals the care and attention which they deserve.

The unsuitability of the existing second-tier authorities and the unsuitability of the regions combine to make a strong case for the new style regional districts, which we recommend, to administer the health, welfare and children's services.

Education

In education the role which we propose for the second-tier authorities will include responsibility for the staffing and day-to-day management of nursery, primary and secondary schools and for the school meals, school health and youth services. Administrative economies of scale and the need for these responsibilities to be in the hands of uniformly able councillors argue against giving this role to the

majority of existing second-tier authorities. These authorities do not have educational responsibilities at present and should not be given them. The county boroughs are responsible for education but in our opinion the majority of them are too small for this purpose. The Herbert Report supports the view that units of less than 100,000 are unlikely to run nursery, primary and secondary schools in the most efficient manner.

But although the majority of existing county boroughs and second-tier authorities are too small, it is equally the case that regions would be too large for the day-to-day running of nursery, primary and secondary schools.

To begin with it is more satisfactory, so far as parents of school age children are concerned, for the local authority with which they must deal to be more local and accessible than the region. It also suits the teachers better. It is partly that parents and teachers want the responsible officials to be close at hand but, even more, that they would be in a much better position to obtain the ear of councillors in an authority with a population of 300,000 or less than they would be if they had to look to a regional councillor.

The more local type of council would also be in a better position to appoint school governors, to decide what (if any) school premises should be available for letting and to whom, and to assess the local need for nursery schools and crèches. In general, it would be better fitted to take all decisions about the day-to-day running of nursery, primary and secondary schools and the youth services – leaving questions of capital expenditure, the design and construction of schools and of broad educational policy to the region.

Although a great deal will depend on successful working relationships being built up between regional and regional district officials, the proposed division between overall policy making and the actual management of schools is altogether preferable to the somewhat remote service which would result from giving the regions sole responsibility for education.

Town v. country

Apart from the weakness of the second-tier authorities today which makes it undesirable to entrust major services to them, there are other arguments in favour of increasing their size and redrawing their boundaries. Leaving their boundaries substantially unchanged would perpetuate the division between town and country which is one of the

most pernicious features of local government today. This division is in most cases administratively unsound. A system whereby services such as health and welfare, and primary and secondary education, are administered within an urban area by one authority and within its surrounding rural catchment area by another is both uneconomic and inconvenient to the public.

As well as being administratively unsound, the division is psychologically unsound. It engenders hostility between town and country when both would benefit from closer co-operation. The introduction of regional authorities will improve the position in the broader planning sphere. The regional districts which we recommend later in the chapter will do so in the sphere of practical administration.

Reorganisation overdue

For these reasons we conclude that it is necessary to carry out a radical reorganisation of the existing county borough and second-tier authorities. Such a reorganisation is already overdue if second-tier authorities, or at least the great majority of them with populations of less than 100,000, are to survive as meaningful local government units. Left as they are the majority of them would probably be deprived of some of their major functions as their inability to perform them adequately became increasingly apparent. Too many people in local government assume that it has some divine right to retain its responsibilities even though these could be performed more efficiently or economically by some other body. This view is subconsciously defeatist. Local government responsibility for a service is justified if, and only if, a unit of local government can administer that service efficiently. Provided that they are reorganised along the lines which we suggest local authorities will more than justify themselves.

Is it opportune?

There still remains the argument that although it may be necessary, or as the protagonists of this view would probably say 'preferable', to reconstitute the existing county borough and second-tier authorities it would be unwise to do this and introduce regional authorities in one fell swoop. The break with the past according to this argument would be too great and the structure of the nation's government would be seriously damaged.

It is conceded that the proposed regional authorities could be introduced with advantage without greatly altering the rest of the system.

However, with only this limited reform the tendency would be for more and more responsibility to be assumed by the regions, which would undoubtedly be effective administrative units, until second-tier local government died on its feet. This must not be allowed to happen and there are great advantages in revising both tiers of local government at the same time. In many ways the revision of each tier complements the other and the readjustments required from the public would be minimised.

Size of regional districts

The size of the proposed regional districts will vary from a minimum population of 100,000 in predominantly rural areas to an average of 200,000 in urban areas, and up to 500,000 in the major conurbations. Greater London will constitute a separate sub-region in the proposed South-East region and the new London boroughs will be regional districts. Birmingham and the other massive conurbations will be broken up into regional districts. They will be more than compensated by being the centres of large and powerful regions.

The regional districts will be the right size for administering the health, welfare and children's services and for being entrusted with the day-to-day management of nursery, primary and secondary schools. They are not so large as to be in any way remote and impersonal nor are they too small to rank as viable administrative units. They should be capable of providing a more efficient and economic, and a no less responsive, service than the second-tier units they are designed to replace. Their size justifies the functions which we propose for them, and the combination of their size and these functions will attract the quality of councillor and senior official needed to ensure their success.

It is not within the purpose of this pamphlet to redraw the administrative boundaries of England and Wales but in our Third and Fourth Schedules to this pamphlet we take a particular region – our proposed Northern Region – and break it down into its regional districts by way of illustration. It will be seen from the table showing the populations of our specimen regional districts that those of the predominantly urban districts are larger than those of the more rural districts and that the populations vary from 460,000 (Tees-side) to 70,000 (Westmorland). It will also be seen that most of the regional districts embrace both rural and urban areas and that they include either one large town or city and its surrounding suburbs and open

spaces or a number of small towns each with its surrounding countryside.

Community councils

In addition to the regions and regional districts, homogeneous communities, themselves not the centres of regional districts, would be allowed a special place in the suggested reorganisation.

Many such communities possess traditions of their own and also a strong sense of identity. Villages and small towns possessing these characteristics should have certain limited functions allocated to them. These functions which would otherwise be performed by the regional districts are as follows: (1) council house lettings, (2) appointment of school governors, (3) local entertainment, (4) allotments, and (5) local footpaths.

Apart from carrying out the above functions these small councils, 'community councils', would speak for their local community in exchanges with their regional district councils and act as a vehicle for protest. This limited role should supplement the more profound ties which hold such communities together.

Shared functions

The chart to this pamphlet indicates the distribution of functions between the regions and their regional districts.* Responsibility for certain services will be divided. The most notable of these is education which has already been discussed in some detail.

Housing is another of these services. The day-to-day management of council housing must belong to the regional district because local knowledge and sensitivity to local feeling is so important. Aspects of day-to-day management include lettings, improvement grants, housing maintenance and rent collection. Regional districts should also be able to select designs for their council houses. As far as possible the district authority should be the one responsible for the appearance of its housing estates. The regions, however, must be able to ensure that the regional development plan is followed. This involves not only the right to say where houses should not be built but also the right to say where they should. The views of a regional district on the subject of siting should always receive careful consideration, but in the last resort, the wishes of the regional council

*The appendix contains some statements about services which are not discussed in the text, viz. public bus services, water resources, air pollution, refuse and litter disposal, and intelligence.

must prevail if regional planning is to be more than an empty phrase. The region should be empowered to initiate comprehensive housing schemes of a type beyond the resources of individual districts, or which overlap district boundaries, and to develop new towns.

The region should also be in a position to influence the design of council houses. It will do this through its powerful Architects Department. The regional districts should be able to obtain designs for council houses much more economically from the regional Architects Department than from private architects. The regional districts will be under no compulsion to obtain their designs from the regions but the savings to be obtained and the high quality of work to be expected should encourage them to do so. The result should be a high level of council house appearance coupled with a long overdue standardisation of components and accessories. The regions would be responsible for making building bye-laws but the districts could apply to them for special local variations.

Planning and traffic

While the regional districts will deal with all routine planning applications, any application involving contravention of the Regional Development Plan will be referred automatically to the regional council. The Minister of Housing and Local Government will hear all appeals from planning decisions as at present.

As for roads and traffic management, the 1959 Highway Act did not go far enough in its rationalisation of road administration. Far more should be possible with the proposed regional authorities. We propose that highways be divided among our authorities as follows:

Ministry of Transport: trunk routes and motorways.

Regions: classified roads and major unclassified roads crossing regional district boundaries.

Regional Districts: other unclassified roads.

This system would avoid the inequity of district councils paying for the upkeep of roads which are mainly used by traffic from outside the district. It would also avoid the inconsistencies in surfacing, width and lighting which are now so prevalent.

Regions will not be expected to set up large works departments. Rather we expect them to contract their work to the districts or, in the case of constructing new roads, possibly to private firms. The district will thus in general be the operating authority for the roads,

acting where main roads are concerned to the region's specifications and standards, and being reimbursed by the region for work carried out in its name.

As traffic management is essentially a problem of through traffic on main roads and is inextricably bound up with public transport, police and the planning of the physical environment, all of which are regional responsibilities, traffic management itself will be a regional function. The districts will, of course, be entitled to initiate proposals for traffic management in their areas.

The regions will need to set up active traffic engineering units, both to carry out research into the existing patterns of traffic movement and likely future patterns and also to carry out experiments in methods of control using television, computers and any other techniques which become available.

Summary of recommendations in Chapter 2

- (1) That the following local government areas be substituted for the existing ones:
 - (a) Regions
 - (b) Regional Districts
 - (c) Communities (only in the case of villages or small towns)
- (2) That the boundaries of the Regions and the Regional Districts be determined by a Royal Commission but that the number of regions should not be less than eight and the minimum population of regional districts should be 100,000 and the maximum, 500,000.
- (3) That the functions of the Regions and the Regional Districts be as set out in the chart to this pamphlet (p. 56).

The constitution of the Regional Councils

THE TASKS which will confront regional authorities will undoubtedly require both councillors and chief officers of the highest calibre. The competition for the top regional posts will improve the quality of chief officers. At present there is a tendency for an official to reach a certain level and then to rest on his laurels because there are no other available jobs offering significantly greater prestige and rewards. The advent of regional chief officerships would reduce this tendency. Regional chief officerships would be better paid than the current top local government posts and would offer greater challenge, greater status and greater influence. They would greatly improve the career image of local government. In addition they would enable the influence of the most intelligent and dynamic of local government officials to be more widely felt within the profession. A number of top local government officials are currently wasted in as much as they could administer larger areas than they do at present without any loss of quality or control, while at the same time a number of other areas – not necessarily smaller – have inadequate chief officers.

Full-time councillors?

Similar factors will also operate to make the quality of councillors at the regional level higher than the quality of county and county borough councillors. In particular, many people of high calibre who are not interested in local government at present will be attracted to it by the greater influence which they will be able to exert at the regional level.

However, additional radical measures are required if regional councils are to realise their full potential. They will do much more than administer services as at present. They will have a creative role in the spheres of town and country planning and economic planning within their regions, and will help to influence national decisions as well. The leading regional councillors should possess vision and administrative ability of a high order and be capable of dealing on equal terms with Whitehall.

If the regional councils are to operate effectively they must have a nucleus of full-time paid councillors. Such councillors would be a new departure in English local government, which has up to now depended entirely on voluntary unpaid service. The merits of voluntary service in local government should not be underestimated. Indeed it will have an important part to play even at the regional level. However, if the regional councils are to influence Whitehall and persuade it, or bludgeon it, into decentralising the government of the nation, they must possess at least some members whose knowledge of the questions at issue is on a par with that of Ministers and their leading advisers. This can never be the case unless some or all regional councillors work on a full-time basis. This means that they must be paid. Unless they are, it will be impossible to attract people of the quality required.

It is often said that local councils are largely comprised of the retired, the housewife and the trade union official. Unfortunately there is a great deal of truth in this statement. Most professional and self-employed people lack the time to be councillors. Many salary or wage earners do so as well and are unable to get time off from work. The introduction of paid councillors at the regional level would create a new profession which should attract many politically minded people in industry, commerce, journalism, the law and other employments. It might also tempt away from the House of Commons a number of MPs who would appreciate not only the greater opportunity to influence policy decisions, but also the chance of making a name for themselves which they could never hope to do as backbenchers.

One of the classic arguments for local government is that it provides a training ground for future national leaders. At present with certain notable exceptions it does not. With a nucleus of paid full-time councillors it would. In this respect it might well prove to be of particular value to a party which experiences a lengthy spell out of office. Past experience at the top of regional government would almost certainly be a source of confidence to a newly-appointed Cabinet Minister in his dealings with Parliament and the Civil Service.

Another pronounced advantage of a leavening of paid full-time councillors at the regional level is that it would do something to restore the position of the elected representative in English local government. As we have already mentioned there is an unfortunate tendency for the majority of decisions taken by local councils, par-

ticularly the larger ones, to be taken by the chief officers of those councils often without the councillors concerned having sufficient knowledge to explain or justify the decision in question. And when one considers the matter, how could this be otherwise? Councillors are usually reasonably good at weighing the facts put before them by their officials and at selecting from alternative solutions recommended to them. Very few, however, are properly versed in subjects such as planning, finance and children's welfare, with the result that they have no means of knowing if the recommended solutions are the best ones. The initiative always lies with the officials.

The basic problem has been well stated in an impressive survey of local government entitled *The Structure of Local Government throughout the World* (S. Humes, Ph.D. thesis, University of Leiden, 1959):

'Without enough resources or enough capable political and administrative leaders to support their activities local representative government becomes useless or a mere façade for central government activity.'

The survey also states in regard to English local government that its great weakness is the absence of effective control by its elected members. The main feature which distinguishes English local government from that in other countries is the lack of any full-time elected members even at the county or big city level. Unless this can be put right it is inevitable that the subordination of local government to Whitehall and the subordination of locally elected councillors to their officials will increase. The twin cults of amateurism and parochialism which bedevil English local government must not be allowed to impede reforms which are required not only to strengthen it but also to preserve it.

Size of the councils

The size of regional councils will of course vary with the population of the regions. Moreover, the ratio of councillors to voters should be higher in the less densely populated regions where transport and communications are weaker. On average the ratio of regional councillors to voters should be similar to that of MPs to voters though if anything a little higher. The average regional council will have approximately seventy members.

The number of his constituents will make the regional councillor less accessible to his constituent than county councillors are at present. This apparently retrograde step is acceptable. Regional

councillors should be mainly concerned with major policy decisions. It is almost impossible for councillors to be able both to make an effective contribution to policy formation and to deal with particular complaints on a large scale. Moreover some people whose qualities fit them ideally for policy formation have neither the inclination nor the ability to deal with a large number of personal grievances. The important job of listening to and sorting out complaints at local level should primarily be that of members of our proposed district and community councils.

Cabinet and committee systems

We have no hesitation in recommending that regional councils adopt both our national government *cabinet system* and our local government *committee system*. The former recommendation will disturb some people because it implies an acceptance of party politics in regional government. In our opinion party politics is not only inevitable at the regional level but also highly desirable. The main function of the regional councils will be to formulate and articulate major policies for the region according to a coherent and long-term plan. This function cannot be performed without the discipline which the party system provides. The party system will encourage regional government based on principles and not merely a fleeting aggregation of whims.

The adoption of the cabinet system for regional councils has far-reaching implications. The possibility of election at irregular intervals must be faced. Local government will benefit greatly from the excitement and interest which this possibility creates. The combination of large areas, major functions and mid-term dissolutions will give regional government a significance and vitality which local government has long been without. Interest in regional government would also be enhanced by the personalisation of regional politics which the adoption of the cabinet system would produce. The leading figures in county councils, county boroughs and even the LCC have signally failed to command the interest or enthusiasm of their respective electorates.

What is suggested, then, is regional councils with a maximum life of three years with a cabinet of full-time councillors, which hereafter we shall refer to as an *executive board*, who can be removed on a vote of censure, and who could then dissolve the council and appeal to the electorate.

We think that three years is a sufficiently long term for our proposed regional councils. At the national level, defence and foreign policy considerations combine to make three years too short a term for Parliament. This is clearly not the case at the regional level, where more frequent exposure to the verdict of the ballot box is desirable. The main argument against the shorter three-year term for regional councils is that the frequency of regional elections may inhibit unpopular but necessary central government action. The central Government after all will be seriously concerned with the fortunes of its political supporters in its regions. This risk is balanced by the likelihood of increased sensitiveness by the national Government to regional needs. The plight of Scotland, Northern Ireland, the North-East and the other unemployment black spots would be much happier today if regional councils had been introduced ten years ago and regional elections fought on their issues.

The power of dissolution

There will be many who will look askance at the idea of the regional executive boards, or more particularly their chairmen, being empowered to dissolve their councils if they have been defeated on a motion involving confidence. But they will need this power if their supporters are to stand behind the party's plans on all major issues so as to implement the programme which won the electorate's support. The whip system will probably not operate as efficiently as at the parliamentary level, bearing in mind that the majority of regional councillors will be part time, and regional leaders will not have the patronage advantages of the Prime Minister. Without the power of dissolution a regional executive board might find itself frustrated by a few dissidents at a time when its policies were popular within the region.

The traditional committee system which we are recommending for the regions has been a definite source of strength in English local government. Even if it is unnecessary for the House of Commons to divide itself into specialist committees, there is no doubt that a council composed largely of part-time councillors must do so if it is to make the most of the time and talent at its disposal.

How many full-timers?

It seems to us that so far as the ruling party is concerned its full-time representatives will consist solely of the executive board. This will

consist of the regional chairman, who would probably take charge of economic planning, and the councillors at the head of each major department or collection of departments. This might mean five full-time councillors in charge respectively of town and country planning, roads and traffic, education, police, and also, if the regions were to take over the administration of the hospital service, health. One such councillor would clearly have to be at the head of each region's finance department, and there should be at least one more full-time councillor without portfolio in each region. He would be available to assist the chairman in formulating the region's broad planning policy and be available to represent the region on Royal Commissions and on bodies such as NEDC and the boards of nationalised industries. This gives the majority party eight or nine full-time councillors.

It would be wrong to allow the majority party a number of full-time councillors without allowing any to the minority party or parties. Deprived of any members with the time to acquire the knowledge and influence required to match that of the majority party's executive board, the position of minority parties would be weak indeed. Rough justice would be done if each such party were allowed one full-time councillor for each 10 per cent of the regional council which it provided. Thus a party with 30 out of 100 seats would have the leadership of three full-time paid councillors.

Selection

In an average region there would be about 12 full-time councillors in a council of 75. How should they be selected? In our view this question permits of only one answer. The leader of each party must be selected by the party itself and then be free to choose his supporting colleagues in the same way as the Prime Minister constructs his Cabinet. This should ensure that the leadership commands the support of its party in the Council and that the executive board is a united group. This is not to say that there are no problems connected with the selection of full-time councillors. If the pool from which they can be chosen only contains the kind of people who are councillors today the gains will be small. Everything will depend on the recruitment of intelligent and forceful people with a record of success in industry or the professions who will regard a place on a regional executive board as a prize worth winning. Success at the top level of regional government should be a feather in the cap for any would-be national politician.

Pay and expenses

A major factor determining the quality of recruits to this new political profession will be the remuneration which is offered. It will need to be on a par with the rewards obtainable by the successful man on his way up in industry or the professions. The Chairman of an executive board should be paid £5,000 p.a. plus expenses, and the other members of the board should be paid £4,000 p.a. plus expenses. The leader of the main opposition party should receive £4,000 p.a. and other full-time opposition councillors £3,000 p.a. The members of the majority party would be like Ministers working full time at the heads of their departments and representing them at meetings of the executive board. Full-time opposition councillors should be provided with adequate secretarial assistance and also have ready access to departmental statistics and information.

There is also the question of what part-time regional councillors should be paid. We want to be sure of getting an effective backbench element and pay will clearly be an important factor in determining the quality of these councillors. They should not be dependent on the current complicated and capricious expenses system to recompense them for time spent, and the trouble and expense to which they are put. They should receive a flat-rate £1,000 p.a., £3 per committee meeting plus a travel allowance based on the distance of their home from the regional capital.

Make it easier to serve

Councillors representing areas on the periphery of a region will have a long way to travel. This, together with the number of meetings to be attended, would deter young executives and professional men from serving as part-time councillors. They would not have the time. It is essential that such people be attracted to regional government service. We make two recommendations designed to make it easier for busy people to serve as councillors.

First, we recommend that all regional committee meetings be concentrated in one long week-end per month with the regional council meeting covering an extra week-day a fortnight later. It is far more convenient for employer and employee for the latter to be away for a spell of two working days per month than for a series of half days or less. The sacrifice of family life is also less.

Secondly, we recommend that employers be under a statutory obligation to release their employees for the two working days in-

volved. This would emphasise the importance to the nation of regional council service and ensure that people were not arbitrarily prevented from serving by their employers.

Regional district councils

We make no proposals for radical changes at the regional district level. The size of the regional districts should improve the career structure in regional district services. It should also mean that the ratio of would-be councillors to councillorships will increase and they should lead to an improvement in the quality of second-tier councillors.

The main tasks of the regional district councillors will be the day-to-day management of services and taking a personal interest in the problems of families and individuals. We believe that these important tasks can be performed well by voluntary part-time councillors. Many local government councillors already make outstanding contributions in these fields.

This is not to say that no improvement can be made at the regional district level. Councillors' expenses should be increased and the machinery for claiming them simplified. In addition, there is a strong case for replacing the lawyer town clerk as chief official by a more broadly trained type of district manager who would be better fitted to co-ordinate the activities of the various departments.

Declaration of faith

Before summarising our major recommendations we repeat that we regard regional councils as a precondition of healthy decentralised and democratically controlled government in the years to come. Our recommendations are designed to ensure that the regional councils will carry their great responsibilities successfully. We are confident that they will.

Summary of recommendations in Chapter 3

- (1) Regional Councils to have 7–15 full-time elected councillors.
- (2) The political leadership of Regional Councils to be provided by an Executive Board consisting of full-time councillors.
- (3) The Chairman of the Executive Board to be chosen by the majority party and thereafter to select his own Board.

- (4) The Executive Board to resign if defeated on a motion of confidence whereupon its Chairman to have power to call an election.
- (5) Subject to (4) above Regional Councils to offer themselves for re-election at the end of three years from when they were elected.
- (6) Chairman of Executive Board to receive £5,000 p.a. plus expenses and other members £4,000 p.a. plus expenses.
- (7) Leader of Opposition to receive £4,000 p.a., and other full-time opposition councillors £3,000 p.a., both plus secretarial and travelling expenses.
- (8) Part-time regional councillors to receive flat-rate £1,000 p.a., £3 per committee meeting plus travelling allowance based on distance of home from the regional centre.

Local government finance

NO ONE IS SATISFIED with the present method of financing local government but nobody has been able to suggest a better scheme to replace it. Until someone does, the existing system whereby nearly all the money needed is obtained from the rates and the Exchequer must remain. It can certainly provide an adequate financial basis for the new authorities proposed in earlier chapters, but there is one large reform which must be carried through before the system is really acceptable and wholly workable and a number of smaller ones which would make it fairer and more efficient.

Rates have long been criticised because they do not necessarily fall most heavily on those with most ability to pay, but it is only in the last few years they have come in for really widespread resentment from the public at large. This has been almost entirely due to the steep increases in annual rate demands to help meet rapidly growing expenditure on education. This hostility has been exacerbated by the recent revaluation which, though very necessary, has had the effect in some areas of raising the domestic rate demand very substantially although the average share paid by householders throughout the country has increased only slightly. In numerous cases the extra weight has fallen heavily on those with limited means or large commitments – pensioners, and families with young children who need larger homes.

The answer recommended here is that education should be financed entirely from Whitehall thus relieving ratepayers of the responsibility of finding £340m. now and increasing sums in future years as the education bill grows. This will not meet the charge that the rating system is fundamentally unjust, but it will reduce the amount of money which has to be found through the rates to a level at which its inequitability ceases to be burdensome.

However, it would certainly be undesirable to finance all local government services in this way and abolish rating entirely for councils must have a source of revenue under their own control. Only while they can raise their own money do they have a real opportunity to experi-

ment and the ability to meet special local demands on their own initiative.

At first sight the removal of all responsibility for the financing of education from local authorities runs counter to this argument, but the present situation is in fact one in which the volume of money raised is to all intents and purposes already controlled by the Ministry and what local autonomy there is, is confined almost entirely to the way in which the money is spent. Paying for all education centrally need not diminish local responsibility very much, but it would go some way towards removing the prime cause of hostility to the rating system and provide a practical, if theoretically untidy, solution to the problem of how the reformed local authority structure should be financed.

A look at rating

As rating presents the most vexed question, it would be as well to look at it first. Since the sixteenth century, it has been a major source of local revenue and for over a century the basis of assessment has been the net annual value of the property. Rates are the mainstay of local finance and they are easily and economically administered and collected. In terms of manpower employed the system is probably the cheapest method of extracting money on a local basis. In most other Western countries, a local tax on property also forms a major part of local government revenue.

The basic disadvantage of the rate as a major local tax is that it does not fairly reflect ability to pay – the underlying principle of national income tax. However, net annual value of domestic property is not entirely regressive as it is linked to the value of the house which usually bears a close relationship to the householder's income.

An alternative form of rate assessment based on site value rather than net annual value has been widely canvassed. Its advocates argue that it would lead to more efficient use of land and reduce the burden of rates falling on householders. A somewhat similar scheme was introduced in 1909 in the form of a land tax but it was repealed in 1920, having yielded less than the cost of its collection. However, an interesting but necessarily very limited survey based on rating by site value has recently been carried out in the town of Whitstable by the Rating and Valuation Association. Attractive though the apparent drop in the rate incidence on householders appears to be, this is – in part – achieved by what all would regard as most undesirably

heavy rating of amenities such as public open spaces and golf courses – although where these are owned by local authorities themselves no revenue accrues. At the same time it would almost certainly present greater problems of assessment and collection than the present system, given the difficulties of deciding what the development value of a site is and of revising it in the light of changing market conditions. Although the burden falling on householders might in general diminish it would appear that in the numerous cases of homes at or near the centres of large towns where the price of land is high the value of the site would be such as to send the rate payable far above the present level. On balance it seems a less satisfactory method than the present one, especially since the recent revaluation has at last put the existing system on to a more realistic basis.

Various other methods of financing local services have been put forward but it is not feasible to examine them here. The issues involved are too complex and often too technical for a pamphlet making a general case for recasting the entire local government structure. Instead attention is focussed on the method which appears to offer the most satisfactory way of financing the regional system recommended in earlier chapters.

However, it is perhaps worthwhile mentioning some of the reasons for rejecting the most persistently canvassed alternative – local income tax. This suggestion has been investigated by several Commissions, and has been rejected each time because of its incompatibility with local government structure. This stems largely from the fact that the PAYE system is based on an individual's place of employment and not of residence. Assuming that a workable form could be devised, it would undoubtedly require a very large bureaucracy to administer. Even then it would probably be impossible to take into account all the factors catered for in the national PAYE system. There would still be the additional problem of how to deal with company profits and investment income and the opportunities for evasion at every stage would be legion.

Exchequer grants

The other present major source of local government finance is the Exchequer grant which now meets over half the net cost of all local government services. Thus, taking the services covered by the general Exchequer grant alone, the most important of which are education, the personal health services, child care and the fire service, the pro-

portion of the cost now met by the Exchequer is some 54 per cent. However, certain authorities, whose rate resources per head fall below the national average, benefit more than others from the central government by means of an equalisation grant.

There are those who wish to see more of the burden of supplying the money necessary falling on the national Exchequer and not on the local councils on the grounds that much of local authorities' spending is the result of policy decided at government level. They argue that the *de facto* power of Westminster should be recognised – and that the money needed to implement national policies should come from the seat of that power.

The closer the problem is examined the clearer it is seen that, except in the case of facilities in respect of which the public pays some form of charge based on extent of use – sometimes in respect of those as well – the local authority is often under national pressure to provide almost all the services it does provide, and is sometimes required to do so. For example, many councils are having to spend large sums on sewage disposal works to bring them into line with new nationally decided standards. Many more may have similar sums to find if national pressures force local councils to provide better sewage facilities in rural areas.

True discretion does exist, of course, but there is really no clear cut difference between spheres where the local authority acts on its own initiative and where it is acting as an agent for the central government – certainly none sufficient to be able to decide on that basis alone whether the government or local authority should meet the cost.

Moreover, as was stated at the outset, it would be undesirable for the government to become responsible for all local government finance because there are many spheres where local discretion can operate if there is a supply of money under the council's control. As all the other major alternatives of raising money locally appear to have such serious disadvantages as to render them impracticable, we are left with the rating system. Rating has the supreme merit of having worked very well over a long period. The trouble is that the system is insufficiently flexible to sustain the increases demanded each year to pay for more and more education without causing great public outcry and considerable hardship to many. Education is the root of these difficulties but it can also provide the way out if it ceased to be a charge on the local authority. To show what this would mean in practice it is necessary to outline the present set-up.

Financing of education

In 1951 a total of £414m. was spent on education. By 1963 this sum had risen by over three times to £1,257m. of which local authorities provided £340m. The 1951 figure represented 3.2 per cent of the gross national product whilst in 1963 it was 4.8 per cent and this is planned to increase by a quarter in real terms over the next few years.

As the education bill is expected to increase at a faster rate than personal incomes, it follows that the percentage contribution from the Exchequer for education must increase substantially, particularly as the cost of providing other local authority services will probably also rise.

The idea has thus gained ground that any further increases in the education bill should be paid for nationally. The extent to which it is suggested that the government should increase its share ranges from the upper limit whereby the Treasury foots the whole educational bill to a lower limit whereby the Exchequer would meet all the new additions leaving the local authorities to continue to find – what they pay now – a basic £340m. a year. The opponents of such a transfer point out that absolute control of education would thus become vested in Whitehall. Is there evidence that the control would be any greater than it is today? Teachers' pay is negotiated at the national level and the Minister's control over the number of schools in local authority building programmes is absolute. True, local variations of a politically controversial nature exist – comprehensive schools, the eleven-plus, and so on – but little important local influence is at work in determining overall cost. The broad lines of education policy are laid down nationally and county education committees – often delegated full powers over what is, in fact, generally two-thirds of county revenue – are accountable to Whitehall officials rather than to the county council. Further, those who oppose such a transfer, but agree that the contribution by local authorities must not rise, should recognise that the Treasury's percentage contribution is going to grow and will only stop short of 100 per cent by the £340m. previously mentioned. The better solution is surely that the Exchequer should assume complete responsibility for education.

Specific grant or increased general grant?

Deciding that the entire cost of education should be met nationally does not exhaust the problem. There remains the question of whether the additional Treasury contribution should be made by increase of

the general grant to local authorities or of whether the entire cost of education should be covered by specific grant.

Where the cost of a vital and growing service is to be borne wholly by the central government and where it would otherwise represent an overwhelmingly large percentage of the general grant if the money required were provided in this way, it would be better to apply the specific grant system. The cost of this service should be clearly shown rather than masked in the general government subsidy. In this way the rising cost of educational services will be kept in front of the electorate which is demanding the expansion.

Effects of meeting educational costs nationally

The effects of transferring the total cost of education to the Exchequer could add approximately a shilling to the standard rate of income tax but this would be offset by the rating reduction. This is not a prospect to be viewed with complete equanimity either by politicians or taxpayers, but there is no reason why the government should not shoulder the extra responsibility by stages or why it should not pay for it through indirect taxation. On the other hand, any increase would be counterbalanced by a welcome drop in rates, for councils must not be allowed to take advantage of such a change to increase expenditure on other items. Nor should the structural changes proposed be used to cloak such increases. The fall in rates occasioned by transferring the cost of education would largely remove the hostility with which the rating system is at present faced and enable it to meet economically and efficiently a substantial share of local authority financial requirements.

Levying and collection of rates

In the new local government structure set out in the preceding chapters the region would be the rate levying authority and would precept a rate on the regional district which would be the rate collecting authority.

The hospital service

If the hospital service were to become regionally administered this could have considerable financial implications for local government. At present the cost is entirely the responsibility of the central authorities through the Ministry of Health. This practice should continue but regional administration on the lines suggested for education should be introduced.

Amendments to the present rating system

In addition to the change in the financing of education, there are certain improvements which should be made to the revenue and expenditure position of local authorities to eliminate certain obvious shortcomings:

- (1) *Premises should pay rates whether occupied or not.* This liability in respect of unoccupied premises should encourage landlords either to make their rents attractive or to redevelop the site to provide buildings meeting modern standards. However, rating of vacant sites is not recommended; this could result in *either* overhasty planning and erection of unsatisfactory buildings *or* in unfortunate friction between would-be developers and local authorities where the local authorities were both planning and rating authorities.
- (2) *Crown property, service buildings, etc., should be assessed for rating purposes and pay the full rate levied.* This might induce departments to reconsider whether they really require all the property they control.
- (3) *Agricultural relief should be progressively reduced.* Agriculture is as much an industry as any other and should be treated as such for rating purposes, albeit in stages. The accident of location should not penalise particular authorities and there seems to be no reason why local communities should subsidise the agricultural industry. If it is to be national policy to do so this should be paid for nationally.
- (4) *Where de-rating applies by virtue of national policy (e.g. charities, universities, schools, etc.) the local authority should be recompensed by the central government for revenues thereby lost.* Again the accident of location (just as in the case of (3) above) should not determine the 'losing' authority.
- (5) *University grants for students should become a purely national charge since universities are a national education service.* This follows from the recommendations on education. The ease of obtaining a university grant should not differ from one education authority to another.
- (6) *Specific local government income arising from services and facilities provided should be examined with a view to making total charges meet expenditure.* Consideration should be given to adjusting library, swimming pool charges, etc. to meet expenditure except where excessive charges to individuals using such services would discourage use.

- (7) *In general, council house tenants should not be subsidised out of the rates except in cases of hardship.* Legislation should be introduced to make rents economic, although subject to rebate or differential schemes where these are desirable and economical to run, i.e. if the cost would be approximately equal to the present rate subsidy such a scheme would not be worth introducing. In short, housing revenue accounts should balance.
- (8) *Rate relief should be given where the yearly rate demand exceeds 5 per cent of a total income falling below £500 p.a.* Total relief of the next $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent is recommended. To discourage people from occupying property rated at a level higher than they can afford no further relief is suggested.
- (9) *Public houses should be rated on the same basis as shops and other businesses.* The current method of rating is based on a somewhat complicated calculation involving numbers of barrels of beer, gallonage of spirits, and amount of catering. Special inspectors are required to assess these figures and are kept constantly on circuit for this purpose. This practice and the theory of the difference between selling drinks and any other commodity are both archaic and should be eliminated.

Services not covered in the text

The public bus services

Practically all the bus (stage stop) services of the country are operated by two groups of companies; on the one hand, the British Transport Commission through its subsidiaries Tilling's Transport (BTC) Ltd and Scottish Omnibuses Ltd; on the other, the British Electric Traction Co. in whose companies the BTC almost invariably has a large share holding. Though there would at first sight appear to be over fifty major bus companies, they are nearly all controlled by these two groups. There are also some ninety-five municipal bus companies, such as those of Birmingham, Bournemouth and Glasgow, which are usually confined within the municipal boundaries.

The major bus companies also run most of the express services, such as those of Royal Blue, which is owned jointly by Southern and Western National companies (both BTC), and the limited stop services, e.g. the London Green Lines.

The private operators, of whom there are 104 running more than 24 buses and coaches and 4,971 running 24 vehicles or less, are thus left with private hire, excursions and tours, particularly holiday travel.* These we think are best run as at present.

It is essential to achieve two main objects for our public bus services:

- (i) The services must be run with the maximum degree of co-operation with other forms of transport, particularly the railways who need good connecting services. Adequate machinery must be established to decide which form of public transport is the most suitable for a particular area and if subsidies are necessary then there must be an elected authority able to decide this and to provide the subsidies directly.
- (ii) The ordinary citizen should be able, through his elected representatives, to criticise or to suggest improvements to these public services.

Our regional councils are suitable authorities to ensure that these aims are carried out far better than they are now. They should be responsible for granting bus service licences, and be the approving authority for changes in bus fares. The effect will be to promote a co-ordinated transport service and to enable the public through its elected representatives to influence decisions on services and fares. To avoid the danger that the public will demand the continuance of grossly uneconomic services we suggest that

*1962 figures.

subsidies granted to any service should be an explicit charge on the region's income. The subsidising of any service will then become a political issue and those in favour will have to convince the regional electorate that it is worth the increase in the regional rates.

The municipal services will in most cases be taken over by the appropriate regional districts.

Water resources

Water is, surprisingly enough, becoming one of our scarcer natural resources. The demand is rising more rapidly than the present structure of local authorities can cope with. A new bulge in population, its concentration into the city regions, and a rapidly rising increase in consumption (both personal and more especially by industry which is estimated by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to raise the consumption from 909m. gallons daily in 1961 to 1,372m. by 1981) have all led to severe shortages in places, particularly the conurbations. Manchester's troubles are well known; London is also thinking about having to import water from the Severn Valley to cope with its demand.

It is not sufficient for groups of local authorities as we have now to co-operate over water supply. Only by an evaluation of all the factors at a regional level can our water supply be assured. Only the authority that is responsible for the overall plan of development, particularly industrial development, can cope. The siting of water catchment schemes and reservoirs and the resultant possibilities of hydro-electric generation of power, of conventional and nuclear power stations using the water for cooling, and of better communications via the Morecambe Bay barrage and the Solway Firth route for the M6, can best be resolved by authorities backed by large research and intelligence departments such as those we propose for our regions.

Likewise the disposal and purification of the vast quantities of liquid waste must be the responsibility of the same regional authorities. The present range of *ad hoc* bodies is too small for the purpose, and less answerable to elected councillors. Main drainage and sewage disposal schemes must be integrated with the overall development of the region. The present situation in which some South-coast resorts have invested in sewage disposal plants sufficient to deal with their holiday traffic only to find their beaches spoilt by the sewage of neighbouring resorts which have not is clearly intolerable. We expect that the regional council will set up sub-committees for each river basin, and that councillors from the districts concerned will sit on these committees where appropriate.

Air pollution

We suggest that the region be responsible for designating smokeless zones and for carrying out research to eliminate the causes of smoke within its

area; the districts will be the responsible administering authorities, which is in line with their other health and housing functions.

Refuse and litter

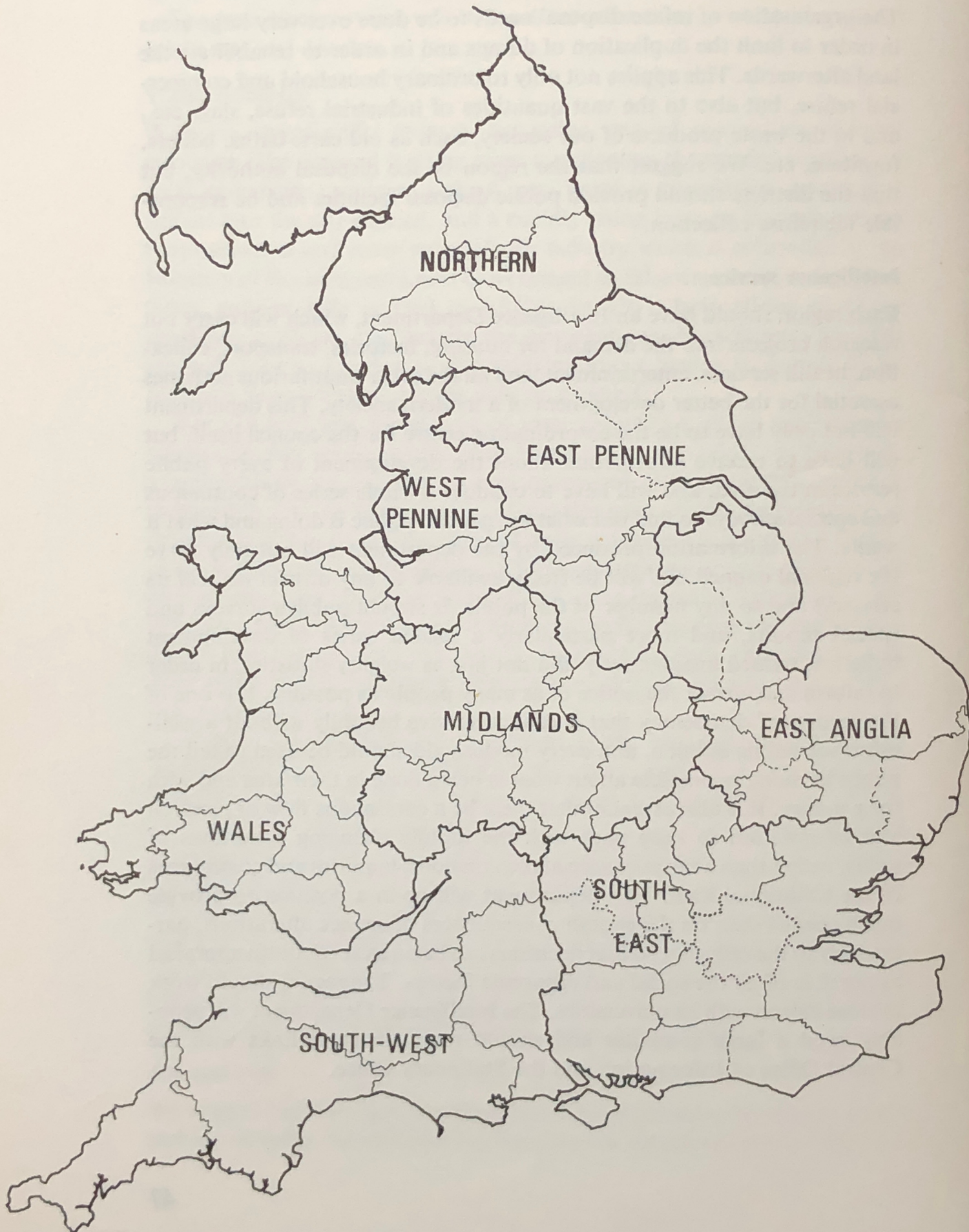
The organisation of refuse disposal needs to be done over very large areas in order to limit the duplication of dumps and in order to rehabilitate the land afterwards. This applies not only to ordinary household and commercial refuse, but also to the vast quantities of industrial refuse, slag, etc., and to the waste products of our society, such as old cars, baths, boilers, furniture, etc. We suggest that the region be the disposal authority, but that the districts should provide public disposal facilities and be responsible for refuse collection.

Intelligence service

Each region should have an Intelligence Department, which will carry out research projects into the demand for housing, factories, transport, education, health services, entertainment, and all the other multifarious activities essential for the better development of a modern society. This department will not only have to be the co-ordinating centre for the council itself, but will have to receive information about the development of every public service in the area, and will have to conduct a whole series of continuous and special surveys to find out what the general public is doing and what it wants. The information produced by the department will not only serve the regional council but will be freely available to any district (as will its services) and to any member of the public. It should publish surveys and special reports, and more particularly a regular series of development bulletins, treated imaginatively and not just as weighty statistics, in order to inform and attract the notice of as many people as possible. It is one of the axioms of democracy that it cannot survive healthily without a well-informed public opinion, and every modern aid should be used to tell the public as much as possible about what is being done in their area and with their money. It is also essential that there be a continuous flow of research and information to keep pace with the rapidly changing conditions of today, rather than a series of special commissions, inquiries and committees of the traditional kind. This department will be in a position to provide much needed data on the overall consequences of service alterations, particularly to the railways, so that decisions can be on as accurate an appraisal as possible of all the social and economic factors. The region should work in close liaison with its universities. The Intelligence Department will probably need a large computer and should maintain close links with the Central Office of Information and the Stationery Office.

THE PROPOSED REGIONS FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The boundaries of every county marked in faint lines



SECOND SCHEDULE

POPULATIONS OF THE REGIONS

Figures are given to the nearest thousand, and therefore the columns do not always add up to the totals. (1961 Census)

	<i>Population centres in thousands</i>	<i>Total populations including centres in thousands</i>
1. Northern England		3,214
Tyneside conurbation	852	
2. West Pennine		6,463
S.E. Lancs. conurbation	2,427	
Mersey conurbation	1,386	
3. East Pennine		6,244
W. Yorkshire conurbation	1,703	
4. Wales		2,641
City of Cardiff	256	
5. Midland		5,913
W. Midlands conurbation	2,344	
6. East Anglia		1,935
City of Cambridge	95	
7. South-West England		3,496
City of Bristol	436	
8. South-East England		16,163
Greater London	7,980	
		46,072

We have included in the table populations of all the conurbations and suggested regional centres for the other regions.

Populations of the Regions with their constituent counties

In this explanation of our proposed regions, we have omitted to mention a few very minor boundary changes concerning a few thousand people only – for instance, Northern England does not include Sedbergh. Figures are given in thousands.

1. Northern England		6. East Anglia	
Northumberland	819	Norfolk	562
Durham	1,517	Suffolk East	343
Cumberland	294	Suffolk West	130
Westmorland	67	Cambridgeshire	190
Yorkshire ¹	412	Isle of Ely	89
Furness ²	105	Huntingdonshire	80
	<hr/>	Soke of Peterborough	74
	3,214	Lincolnshire	
	<hr/>	Holland	103
		Kesteven	135
		Lindsay ⁹	230
			<hr/>
2. West Pennine			1,935
Lancashire ³	5,027		<hr/>
Cheshire	1,368		
Derbyshire ⁴	68		
	<hr/>		
	6,463		
	<hr/>		
3. East Pennine		7. South-West England	
West Riding	3,641	Gloucestershire	1,000
North Riding ⁵	142	Wiltshire	423
East Riding	527	Somerset	599
Nottinghamshire	903	Dorset	309
Derbyshire ⁶	755	Devon	823
Grimsby ⁷	275	Cornwall	342
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	6,244		3,496
	<hr/>		<hr/>
4. Wales		8. South-East England	
As now (including		L.C.C.	3,195
Monmouth)		Middlesex	2,230
	<hr/>	Kent	1,701
	2,641	Surrey	1,733
	<hr/>	Sussex East	665
5. Midland		Sussex West	411
Shropshire	297	Hampshire	1,336
Staffordshire	1,734	Isle of Wight	95
Worcestershire	569	Berkshire	503
Warwickshire	2,023	Buckinghamshire	486
Herefordshire	131	Oxfordshire	309
Leicestershire	682	Hertfordshire	832
Rutland	24	Bedfordshire	381
Northamptonshire	398	Essex	2,287
Derbyshire ⁸	55		<hr/>
	<hr/>		16,163
	5,913		<hr/>
	<hr/>		

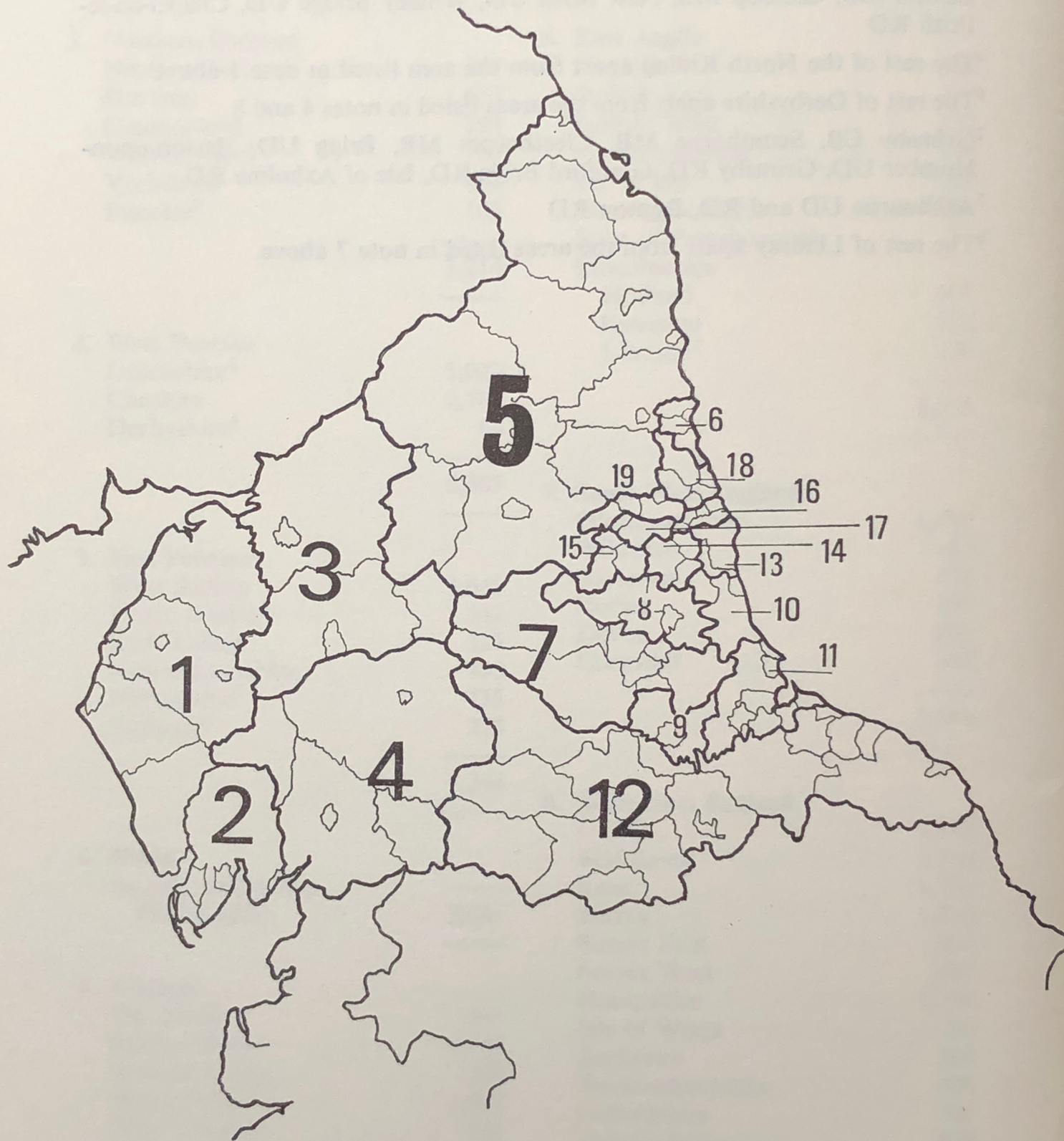
NOTES

- ¹The northern part of the North Riding; see Districts 11 and 12 of the Northern Region
- ²The Barrow in Furness district of the Northern Region (District 2)
- ³The rest of Lancashire apart from the area listed in note 2 above.
- ⁴Buxton MB, Glossop MB, New Mills UD, Whaley Bridge UD, Chapel-en-le-Frith RD
- ⁵The rest of the North Riding apart from the area listed in note 1 above
- ⁶The rest of Derbyshire apart from the areas listed in notes 4 and 8
- ⁷Grimsby CB, Scunthorpe MB, Cleethorpes MB, Brigg UD, Barton-upon-Humber UD, Grimsby RD, Glanford Brigg RD, Isle of Axholme RD
- ⁸Ashbourne UD and RD, Repton RD
- ⁹The rest of Lindsay apart from the areas listed in note 7 above.

THIRD SCHEDULE

**THE PROPOSED REGIONAL DISTRICTS FOR
NORTHERN ENGLAND**

The boundaries of every borough and district marked in faint lines



FOURTH SCHEDULE

POPULATIONS OF THE NORTHERN REGION DISTRICTS

Population
(1961 Census).

1. West Cumberland	168,668
2. Barrow in Furness	105,357
3. Carlisle	125,494
4. Westmorland	70,515
5. Cheviot	154,888
6. Blyth	102,666
7. Bishop Auckland	166,448
8. Durham	89,648
9. Darlington	108,004
10. Seaham	128,667
11. Tees-side	466,486
12. North Yorkshire	163,600
13. Sunderland	218,081
14. Chester-le-Street	109,751
15. Consett	115,822
16. South Shields	221,338
17. Gateshead	128,023
18. Tynemouth	227,135
19. Newcastle	347,784
	<hr/>
	3,218,375
	<hr/>

Division of the Northern Region into Districts

1. West Cumberland		2. Barrow-in-Furness	
Cockermouth UD	5,823	Barrow-in-Furness CB	64,824
Keswick UD	4,752	Dalton-in-Furness UD	10,317
Maryport UD	12,334	Ulverston UD	10,515
Whitehaven MB	27,541	Grange UD	3,117
Workington MB	29,507	North Lonsdale RD	16,584
Cockermouth RD	20,886		<hr/>
Ennerdale RD	30,870		105,357
Millom RD	15,087		<hr/>
Wigton RD	21,868		
	<hr/>		
	168,668		
	<hr/>		

3. Carlisle		7. Bishop Auckland	
Carlisle CB	71,112	Weardale RD	9,986
Border RD	29,647	Barnard Castle UD	4,969
Penrith UD	10,931	Barnard Castle RD	16,961
Penrith RD	11,606	Sedgefield RD	37,642
Alston with Carrigill RD	2,198	Shildon UD	14,372
	<hr/>	Bishop Auckland UD	35,276
	125,494	Spennymoor UD	19,104
	<hr/>	Crook and Willington UD	25,218
		Tow Law UD	2,920
			<hr/>
4. Westmorland			166,448
Appleby MB	1,751		<hr/>
Kendal MB	18,595	8. Durham	
Lakes UD	6,061	Durham MB	20,484
Windermere UD	6,556	Durham RD	35,029
North Westmorland RD	15,332	Brandon and Byshottles UD	19,531
South Westmorland RD	18,927	Lanchester RD	14,604
Sedburgh RD	3,293		<hr/>
	<hr/>		89,648
	70,515		<hr/>
	<hr/>		
5. Cheviot		9. Darlington	
Berwick-upon-Tweed MB	12,166	Darlington CB	84,162
Norham and Islandshires RD	3,866	Darlington RD	23,842
Belford RD	4,994		<hr/>
Glendale RD	7,029		108,004
Alnwick UD	7,482		<hr/>
Alnwick RD	12,115	10. Seaham	
Amble UD	4,889	Seaham UD	26,048
Rothbury RD	5,486	Hetton UD	17,463
Bellingham RD	5,285	Easington RD	85,156
Castle Ward RD	25,203		<hr/>
Haltwhistle RD	6,884		128,667
Hexham UD	9,897		<hr/>
Hexham RD	20,177	11. Tees-side	
Morpeth MB	12,430	Stockton RD	9,697
Morpeth RD	16,985	Stockton-on-Tees MB	81,198
	<hr/>	Thornaby-on-Tees MB	22,786
	154,888	Middlesbrough CB	157,308
	<hr/>	Billingham UD	32,130
6. Blyth		West Hartlepool CB	77,073
Blyth MB	35,933	Hartlepool MB	17,674
Ashington UD	27,294	Eston UD	37,160
Newbiggin-by-the-Sea UD	10,066	Redcar MB	31,460
Bedlingtonshire UD	29,373		<hr/>
	<hr/>		466,486
	102,666		<hr/>
	<hr/>		

12. North Yorkshire

Richmond MB	5,764
Richmond RD	20,602
Startforth RD	4,286
Reeth RD	1,823
Aysgarth RD	3,302
Leyburn RD	6,131
Masham RD	1,586
Bedale RD	8,215
Northallerton UD	6,720
Northallerton RD	8,610
Croft RD	2,096
Stokesley RD	25,571
Whitby UD	11,662
Whitby RD	11,374
Loftus UD	8,111
Saltburn and Marske-by-the-Sea UD	12,482
Skelton and Brotton UD	13,186
Guisborough UD	12,079
	<hr/>
	163,600

13. Sunderland

Sunderland CB	189,629
Sunderland RD	28,452
	<hr/>
	218,081

14. Chester-le-Street

Chester-le-Street UD	18,948
Chester-le-Street RD	40,982
Houghton-le-Spring UD	31,049
Washington UD	18,772
	<hr/>
	109,751

15. Consett

Consett UD	38,927
Stanley UD	46,280
Blaydon UD	30,615
	<hr/>
	115,822

16. South Shields

South Shields CB	109,533
Jarrow MB	28,752
Hebburn UD	25,042
Boldon UD	22,409
Felling UD	35,602
	<hr/>
	221,338

17. Gateshead

Gateshead CB	103,232
Whickham UD	24,791
	<hr/>
	128,023

18. Tynemouth

Tynemouth CB	70,112
Longbenton UD	44,633
Seaton Valley UD	26,086
Whitley Bay MB	36,519
Wallsend MB	49,785
	<hr/>
	227,135

19. Newcastle

Newcastle upon Tyne CB	269,389
Newburn UD	27,879
Gosforth UD	27,072
Ryton UD	13,485
Prudhoe UD	9,959
	<hr/>
	347,784

DISTRIBUTION OF FUNCTIONS BETWEEN THE REGIONS AND THEIR REGIONAL DISTRICTS

PARLIAMENT

defines the functions and sets up the structure of local government

REGION (pop. 2m.-16m.)

Eight in all:

Northern England

West Pennine

East Pennine

Wales

Midland

East Anglia

South-West England

South-East England

(sub-regions: GLC,

North Thames, South Thames)

Council responsible for:

Economic planning

Environmental planning – preparation of development plan and overall development control

Education – policy for nursery, primary, secondary further and technical education; administration of the two latter; youth employment service; provision of special schools

Police

Training

Fire and ambulance services

Hospitals

Main drainage

Highways and traffic management – all classified roads

Design of schools and houses – supervision of construction of former

Bus services

Central libraries – co-ordination of district libraries

Entertainment and cultural provisions

REGIONAL DISTRICT

(pop. at least 100,000)

The number in each

Region will vary with different sizes and features of Regions

Council responsible for:

Housing management – including control of unfit houses

Planning applications – subject to Regional plan

Health and welfare services, children's services

Food and Drugs, Shops and Offices Acts, weights and measures inspections, etc. licences

Refuse collection

Rate levy and collection

Local drainage

Non-classified roads

Cemeteries

Public libraries

Education – staffing and day-to-day running of nursery, primary, and secondary schools

COMMUNITY

(smaller units within Regional Districts)

Each small Community will retain its individual identity although part of a Regional District

Council responsible for:

House letting – by delegation from Regional District

Local entertainment

Footpaths

Allotments

Appointment of school governors, etc. – within area of Community

Advisory body to regional district – vehicle for protests, etc.

The Bow Group

The Bow Group is an independent organisation of younger Conservatives which was founded in 1951 as a political research society. The first meetings of the Group were held at the Bow and Bromley Constitutional Club in the East End of London.

The Bow Group is in no sense a pressure group ; it has no corporate views, nor does it stand for any special kind of Conservatism – left, right or centre. It is not linked formally to the Conservative Party although all its members are Conservatives.

The Group's chief work is done by a number of research teams, but regular meetings are held in London and Birmingham. In addition, the Group has branches in most large cities. As well as publishing reports on research the Bow Group produces a quarterly magazine, *Crossbow*. Enquiries about the Group or about subscriptions to the Bow Group literature service and *Crossbow* should be made to: THE BOW GROUP, 240 High Holborn, London WC1 (Holborn 0878).



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